

Impact of Environmental Factors on Scholastic Achievement of Secondary Students With Reference To Ashram Schools of West Bengal

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Abstract:

Objective: The prime focus of the paper is to find the relationship between the environmental factors and scholastic achievement of students and their impact on the Ashramic schools of West Bengal. The paper studied the impact in two different environments i.e., rural and urban. The school environment always has a remarkable influence on the students' performance which depend upon the kind of attention they are devoting as well as the kind of factors prevails there. Therefore, the present study will determine the different types of environmental factors and their impact on students' scholastic achievement in the Ashram schools of West Bengal.

Methodology: The study is Descriptive survey nature where purposive sampling techniques has been adopted for selecting the respondents from the study area of West Bengal. The total number of respondents were 103. As a research instrument investigator used three different tools- three self-made questionnaire tools were used for collecting responses from the respondents. First questionnaire deals with the dimensions of environment, second one deals with interaction techniques and lastly with the dimension of physical facilities. The data were analyzed with the help of descriptive and inferential statistics using SPSS software.

Result: The findings of the study reveals that there is significant relationship between variables. The cause and effect level is high and the null hypothesis is rejected. Here ashramic school environment is influenced by the factors of student approach, psychological environment, peer influence, classroom and physical facilities. . Secondly, significant differences exist between rural and urban which affects the scholastic achievement of students and null hypothesis get rejected. Thirdly, the physical facilities of Ashramic schools in different localities has significant effect on the scholastic achievement of secondary students in West Bengal.

Findings: Therefore, the school authorities need to give attention to all the environmental factors in the school so that their pertinent issues can be solved and their academic success can be increased. Government should frame guideline for monitoring, evaluating and assessing the criteria in order to enhance their scholastic achievement.

Keywords: *Environmental factors, scholastic achievement, ashram schools, secondary students.*

1. Introduction

The origin of the Ashram schools functioning initiated in the state of Gujarat is within the basic education or new coaching of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. The Kocharab Ashram and the castaway Ashram established by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi in Gujarat are wonderful samples of this. The fundamentals of basic education within the ashram faculty have come back from these ashrams. Gandhiji's main objective behind establishing the ashram was to organize freedom fighters for the liberty struggle and to run constructive programs. Later, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi additionally joined basic education with ashram life. The Ashram schools that are pass by State Governments are a vital tool to offer formal education to ST offsprings. Within the Sixties, Ashram school was started on experimental basis. Consistent with Dewey (1926) Education is a continuous process of experiencing and of revising or non-revising experiences. It is the development of all those capacities in the individual, which enable him to control his environment and fulfill his possibilities' (Y.K.Singh, p.22). As a student spends most of his life in school or college surroundings, these surroundings are extremely liable for the inculcating of best values in him. The Kothari Commission (1964-66) has superbly aforementioned, "The destiny of Bharat is currently being formed in her classrooms" (p.2). As students are the backbones of the society, it is vital to take care of healthy faculty surroundings. The more the emphasis on speeding up the learning process, the more will be the emphasis on a good learning environment. The school environment plays an important and vital role in students' performance and behavior modification. It is the catalyst of change; they are the torchbearers always lighting the path towards the progress of the world in all its facets. Consistent with Ajewole and Okebukola (2000), variety of things are aforementioned to own contributed to the students' poor scholastic action at school. The authors stress that a bunch of those factors could surround students' poor action at school, which can include poor study habits and lack of accessible resource materials, poor faculty climate, trait, inadequate facilities, teachers' powerlessness, the method, and also the sort of learning surroundings accessible for each the

scholars and also the academics. From the author's read, the poor performance of scholars in Ashramic faculty could also be a mirrored image of the sort of learning surroundings. Tsavga (2011) maintains that the learning plays a significant role in how students perform or respond to circumstances and situations around them. This means that no society is empty. Environmental influences the learning surrounding to a large extent and determines how a student behaves and interacts, that is to say, the environment in which we find ourselves tend to mould our behavior so as to meet the demands of life whether negatively or positively. The author opined that the will for each qualitative and quantitative education has increased the matter of providing good and causative learning surroundings for teaching and learning.

1.1. Need and Significance of Study

Positive nurturing surrounding is an important part of learning. It is in the positive surroundings a student feels comfortable; an area wherever healthy relationships with peers and academics flourish. During positive surroundings, the method of learning becomes one thing that students simply adapt to and appearance forward to. To realize these surroundings, young students need to be nurtured amorously, care, and support. As we tend to all grasp, today, learning during a college involves quite simply being exposed to information and set of content. Analysis has established that youngsters absorb all that they observe around them, which they learn best after they feel snug enough to explore their surroundings. During positive and nurturing surroundings, students show their authentic curiosity towards selves and paint the globe with their distinctive and individual brush strokes. In the Ashramic schools of West Bengal the living surroundings is not satisfactory. The reading and writing conditions are lack of physical and psychological facilities, discipline of teachers, peer influence etc., which leads to poor scholastic achievement within learners. In such schools, there are three-sub frameworks- approach, method and opportunities, which create an impact on their domains of academic achievement. If any of the sub-framework is neglected then it downtroddens their scholastic achievement. So the researcher will highlight on the environmental factors that have an impact on the scholastic achievement of secondary school students.

1.2. Review of Literature

Various studies have been conducted in past related to Ashram Schools, which are delineated below:

Chaudhary, P. (2010). "The Academic Achievement of Tribal Students of Ashram Schools of Surat District". The academic achievement of tribal students of Ashram Schools of Surat district was found average in Gujarati, Hindi, Social Science and Mathematics while below average in English and Science and Technology. So, there was a need to find out the reasons behind their different levels of achievement in different subjects. The paper shows condition and quality of inputs and the functioning of schools with large ST population is not very encouraging. In addition, there is need to improve the quality of education in ashram schools.

Jojo, B. (2013). "Decline of Ashram Schools in central and eastern India: Impact on education of ST children". The objective is to assess the quality of education in Ashramic Schools. In this endeavour, an attempt has been made to look at the infrastructure, staffing, amenities and the quality of curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. In its methodology, the article deals with explanatory research design; survey and evaluative design were allowed to access the functioning of such schools. Based on the findings of the data collected from 13 Ashram schools, the connection between lack of quality in education and obstructions in the road to tribal development becomes clearer.

Dr. Adhvaryu, Tejal. & Dr. Pancholi, Ravindra. (December 2020). "Status & Impact of Ashram Schools for Scheduled Tribe Children – Special reference to Gujarat state". Ashram shala is one of the key institutes for spreading primary education among tribal groups, Shri A V. Thakkar an eminent worker was pioneer of the Ashram shala Yojana. The study highlighted on the condition of Ashram schools on the aspect of education, accommodation and nutritional deficits in the state of Gujrat. It also suggested some guidelines for the improvement of the condition.

1.3. **Research Gap**

The literature review reveals that most of the research studies were undertaken to showcase the problems, challenges, present conditions, scenario of Ashram Schools with reference to tribal community. However, apart from tribal community general population were also enroll in such schools. Very few studies has been conducted on general population related to Ashram school and with that even negligible or almost parallel to none of the study has been conducted in Ashram Schools of West Bengal related to impact of environmental factors on scholastic achievement. So essential considerations needed to highlight on the environmental factors that has an impact on the scholastic achievement of secondary school students.

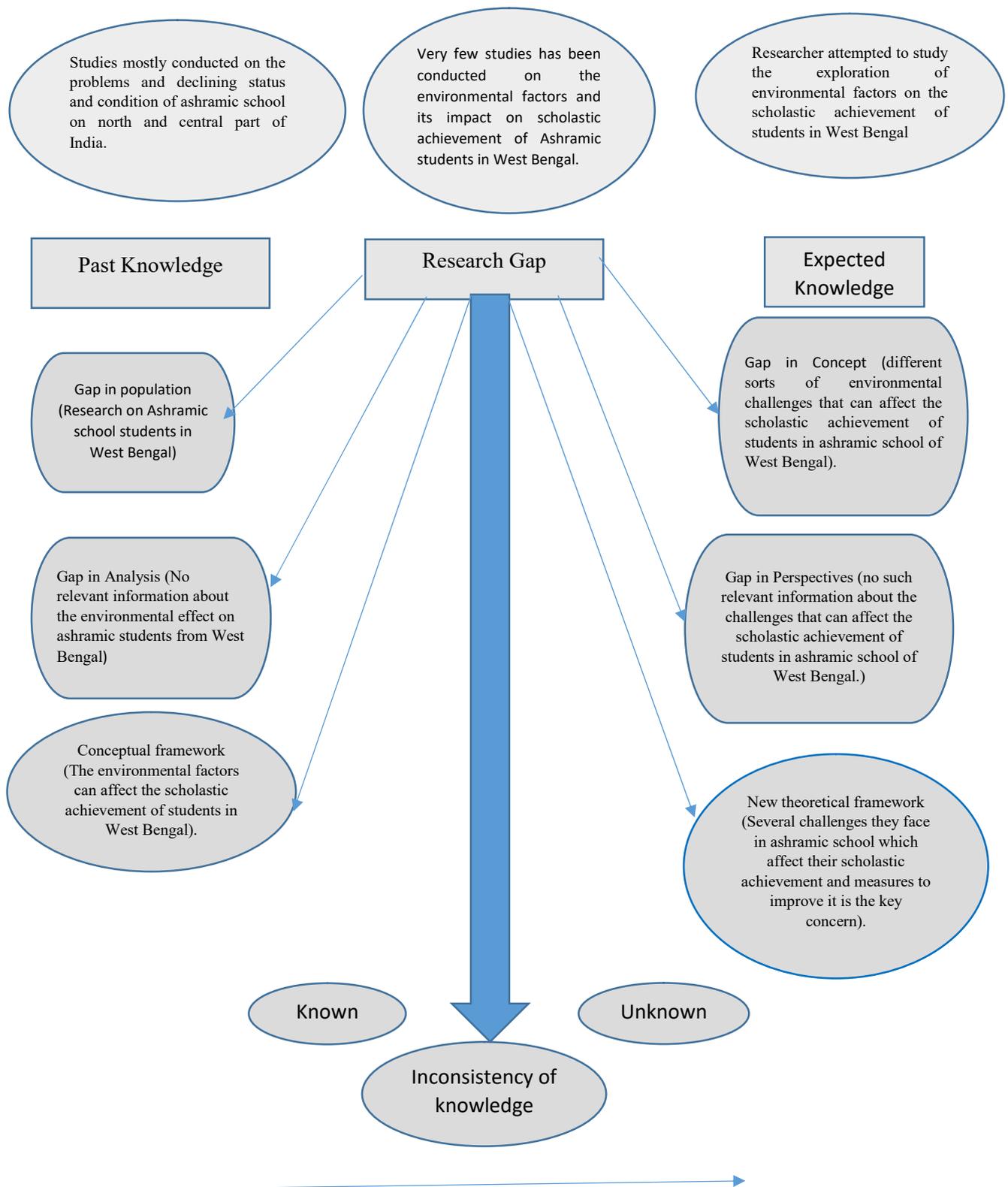


Figure 1: Showing the Research gap of previous study and the formation of new conceptual framework

The literature review reveals that most of the research studies were undertaken to showcase the problems, challenges, present conditions, scenario of Ashram Schools with reference to tribal community. However, apart from tribal community general population were also enroll in such schools. Very few studies has been conducted on general population related to Ashram school and with that even negligible or almost parallel to none of the study has been conducted in Ashram Schools of West Bengal related to impact of environmental factors on scholastic achievement. So essential considerations needed to highlight on the environmental factors that has an impact on the scholastic achievement of secondary school students.

1.4.Statement of the Problem

In the backdrop of the above discussion, a study is undertaken which is stated as follows: “Impact of Environmental Factors on Scholastic Achievement of secondary school students in Ashram Schools of West Bengal”.

1.5.Research Objectives

- To determine the impact of Ashramic school environment on scholastic achievement of secondary school students in West Bengal.
- To examine the impact of discipline of teachers on scholastic achievement of secondary Ashramic school students in West Bengal.
- To assess the impact of school physical facilities on scholastic achievement of secondary Ashramic school students in West Bengal.

1.6.Formulation of Hypothesis

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

- Ho₁: The Ashramic school environment has no significant impact on the scholastic achievement of secondary school students in West Bengal.
- Ho₂: The discipline of Ashramic teachers has no significant effect on the scholastic achievement of secondary Ashramic school students in West Bengal.
- Ho₃: The physical facilities of Ashramic schools in different localities has no significant effect on the scholastic achievement of secondary students in West Bengal.

1.7.Scope of Study

The scope of study has been delineated below:

- Environmental factors that creates an impact on the scholastic achievement of urban secondary school students in West Bengal.

- Environmental factors that creates an impact on the scholastic achievement of rural secondary school students in West Bengal.
- Environmental factors that creates an impact on the male scholastic achievement of secondary school students in West Bengal.
- Environmental factors that creates an impact on the female scholastic achievement of secondary school students in West Bengal.

1.8. Variables of Study

The present study will highlight on the environmental factors, which has an impact on the scholastic achievement of secondary school students from West Bengal. Therefore, the variables of the present study are as follows:

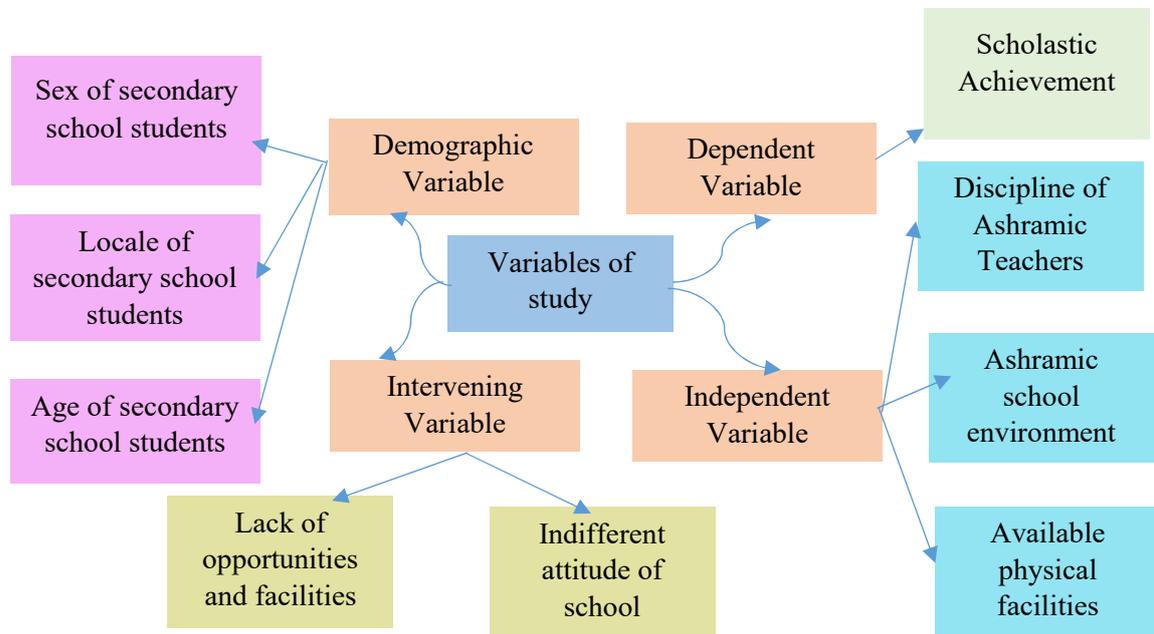


Figure 2: Showing the variables under study

2. Methodology of Study

According to Kerlinger (1973), research design consists of a structure of research and research techniques. The method of the research study is based on the objectives and the nature of the data required for the study. Therefore, the investigators will adopt the research design of Survey nature. The method will be an exploratory one where information will be collected from the respondents to gain insight into the problem.

2.1.Flowchart of Study Research

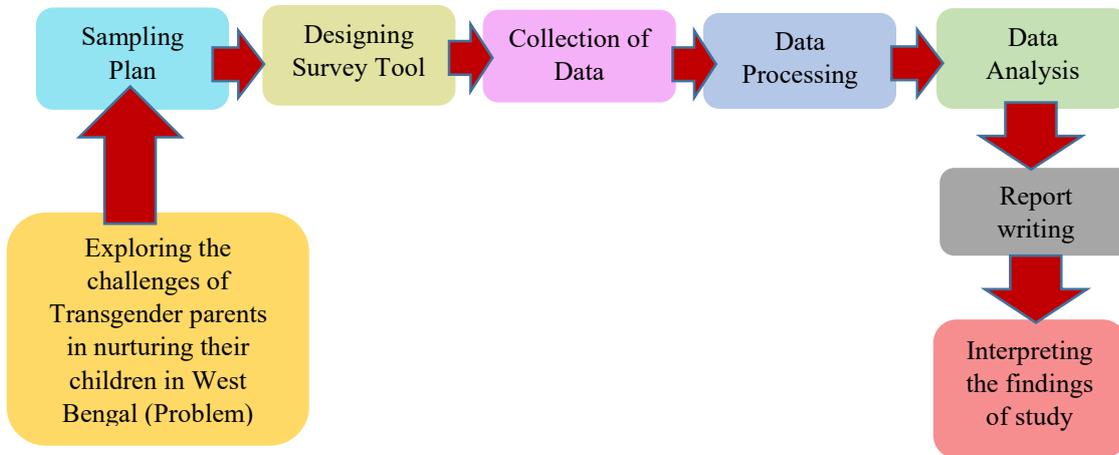


Figure 3: Showing the methodology for conducting the survey research

The present study was carried out in different schools of West Bengal. To explore the impact of environmental factors on the scholastic achievement of secondary students in the Ashram school of West Bengal through effective measures so survey research were used. It helped to know the characteristics or variables under the study. At the execution stage of the survey research, the main activities will be performed by a researcher will be very much concerned with designing selection of representative sample, making use of survey tool, i.e., questionnaire as the most likely preferred tool for collecting, processing, analyzing, data or information for getting genuine answers that is being raised in research problem. So the investigator must frame it with standardization, development and application with task of reporting along with conclusion or findings reached for the very purpose of effective utilization in survey studies.

2.2.Area of Study

The study was conducted in the districts of West Bengal.

2.3.Target Population

The total percentage of secondary students in Ashram schools.

2.4.Method of Data Collection

The study made use of both primary and secondary data.

Primary data was collected by applying the self-made questionnaire tool and responses were collected from the respondents through interviews. It refers to that data which is collected for a specific purpose from the field and are original in nature.

Secondary data were collected through various web sources and expert opinion, various textbooks, websites, journals, dissertations, etc.

2.5. Sample of the Study

To estimate the sample size Krejcie and Morgan table were used. For a given population of 140 the collected number of sample for study is 103. To determine the sample size investigator used the Morgan's Table with 5% error of margin at 95% confidence level (Morgan, 1970) to justify the authenticity of selected sample size.

2.6. Sampling Technique

Investigator used purposive sampling techniques for data collection. Data, collected from primary sources, has been compiled from Quantitative analysis. This technique is based on three criteria which are delineated below:

- Firstly, the respondents must belong from the Ashram School.
- Secondly, they must belong from the state of West Bengal.
- Thirdly, they must not belong to the category of exceptional children.

2.7. Tool used for the study

As research, instrument investigator used three self-made questionnaire tools for collecting responses from the respondents. First questionnaire deals with the dimensions of environment, second one deals with interaction techniques and lastly with the dimension of physical facilities.

Table 1: showing Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
14-15	67	65.04%
15-16	36	34.96%
Locale		55.33%
Urban	57	
Rural	46	44.66%

Sex		
Boys	55	53.39%
Girls	48	46.60%

Source: Field survey (2020)

3. Analysis and Interpretation

For analysis purpose, data were scientifically interpreted.

3.1. *Pertaining to Hypothesis 1*

H₀₁: The Ashramic school environment has no significant impact on the scholastic achievement of secondary school students in West Bengal.

Table 2: showing the correlation studies between the variables

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
Student centered approach	5.67	.234	1	.952	.952	1.000	.718
Classroom physical facilities	5.23	.345	.952	1	1.000	.952	.683
Peer Influence	5.12	.5224	.952	1.000	1	.952	.683
Psychological Environment	4.99	.467	1.000	.952	.952	1	.718
Scholastic Achievement	5.02	.686	.718	.683	.683	.718	1

Source: From SPSS software

From the table 2, it is being displayed that, the correlation between the variables are highly positive. The highest correlation is found between student approach and psychological environment ($r=1.000$), physical facilities and peer influence ($r=1.000$). So positive relationship prevails between variables. The more the student-centered approach is followed in the school the more positive psychological environment i.e., mental peace, satisfaction, interest, positive attitude is found among learners. On the other hand the more classroom facilities are available the more positive peer influence prevail i.e., participation in group activities, pairing programme etc., all these activities develop positive interaction between, develop self-confidence and self-esteem.

Table 3: Showing the Regression Model Summary

Model 1	R	R ²	Adjusted R	Result
	.912	.832	.831	.000

Source: From SPSS software

From Table 3 it was observed that the model explains overall 91% (R-value .912) by predicting the independent variable, it explains that 91% of influence on scholastic achievement. R square value is .832 which indicates that 83.2% of scholastic achievement can be effected to predictors, Adjusted R square is .831, which means that the model is fit for further interpretation. The significance level is .000, which is less than .05 and .01 levels, which indicates that independent variable has positive effect on dependent variable. The cause and effect level is high and the null hypothesis gets rejected. Here ashramic school environment are influenced by the factors of student approach, psychological environment, peer influence, classroom and physical facilities.

3.2. Pertaining to Hypothesis 2

Ho₂: The interaction techniques of teachers does not affect the scholastic achievement of secondary Ashramic school students in West Bengal.

Table 4: showing the descriptive statistics and the result of t-test

Variables	Locality	Mean	SD	Sig. Value
My teacher maintain punctuality in class	Urban	4.42	1.64	.000
	Rural	3.65	.948	
My teacher promptly answers students 'questions in class	Urban	3.54	1.536	.000
	Rural	1.72	.544	
My teacher bother whether or not students complete assignments	Urban	4.39	1.25	.000
	Rural	3.76	.899	
My teacher assists always give motivation in class	Urban	4.12	1.57	.000
	Rural	3.20	.855	
My teacher give extra time to my peers	Urban	1.68	1.34	.013
	Rural	2.26	.773	
My teacher present information in easy and comprehensive way	Urban	1.58	1.1	.000
	Rural	2.24	.603	
My teacher explain the concept in easy and understandable way	Urban	1.58	1.14	.000
	Rural	2.24	.603	

My teacher use punishment in a classroom	Urban	2.96	2.9	.000
	Rural	4.63	4.6	
My teacher guide students in positive direction for their personal growth.	Urban	4.12	1.51	.000
	Rural	3.20	.885	
I am having good relation with my teacher	Urban	1.00	.000	.000
	Rural	1.00	.000	

Source: From SPSS software

From the table 4, it is visible that the interaction technique of teacher has significant effect on the scholastic achievement of students. If we compare on the basis of locality in the most of the cases urban schools have high average score in compare to rural, only in the case of extra time, presenting information in easy way, understandable way and using punishment technique is high in rural locality in compare to urban. So significant differences exist between rural and urban which affects the scholastic achievement of students and null hypothesis gets rejected. Though the condition of urban school is better than rural but it is not far better. The decline of secondary students' achievement in Ashramic school is evitable all over India. So preventive measures need to be implemented to come up with better solution.

3.3. Pertaining to Hypothesis 3

H₀₃: The physical facilities of Ashramic schools in different localities has no significant effect on the scholastic achievement of secondary students in West Bengal.

Table 5: showing the descriptive statistics and the result of t-test

Variables	Locality	Mean	SD	Sig. Value
My school is as spacious in size	Urban	1.67	1.537	.000
	Rural	3.51	.701	
My school has all equipment in laboratories	Urban	4.39	.493	.000
	Rural	2.53	1.05	
My school has proper toilet facilities	Urban	4.39	1.34	.000
	Rural	1.39	.899	
My school has all teaching learning resources	Urban	4.39	.43	.000
	Rural	2.53	.56	
My classroom has proper seating arrangements	Urban	2.74	1.34	.000
	Rural	1.39	.773	

Source: From SPSS software

From the table 5, it is found that, though urban schools are less spacious than the rural. The average and S.D. of urban is 1.67 ± 1.573 and rural is with $3.51 \pm .701$ but other facilities like equipment in laboratories, toilet facilities, present of learning resources and proper seating arrangements are more better in urban ashramic schools in compare to rural which affects the scholastic achievements of students. The physical facilities actually secure students attention towards school, learning and performance of students in different activities. Significant differences were found in such aspects so null hypothesis is rejected with $p \leq 0.05$. The physical facilities of Ashramic schools in different localities has no significant effect on the scholastic achievement of secondary students in West Bengal.

Table 6: Showing the Descriptive Statistics related to locality of Ashram school and scholastic achievement scores of secondary students

Sample	N	Frequency	Percentage
Urban	57	High 25	43.37%
		Medium 27	47.33%
		Low 5	8.77%
Rural	46	High 5	10.0%
		Medium 16	34.8%
		Low 25	54.3%

Source: From SPSS software

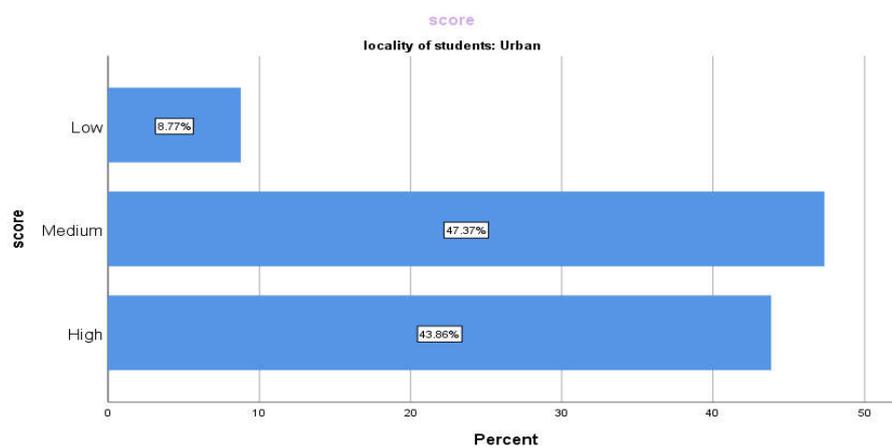


Figure 4: showing the graphical representation of scholastic achievement scores from the students of urban locality

From the Table 6 and graphical representation 4, it is being found that, in the urban locality the scholastic achievement of ashramic students the medium performance is high with 47.33%, high scorer with 43.37% and low scorer with 8.77%. The medium performance is high among students as though the schools are having essential ingredients but still is not

sufficient. Again, the authority does not properly utilize these ingredients like the building maintenance, sanitation, lodging etc are not properly maintained that actually affect the scholastic achievement of students. The urban schools are less spacious in compare to rural so many schools playground; garden, extracurricular activity room's facilities are not available, which affect the scholastic achievement.

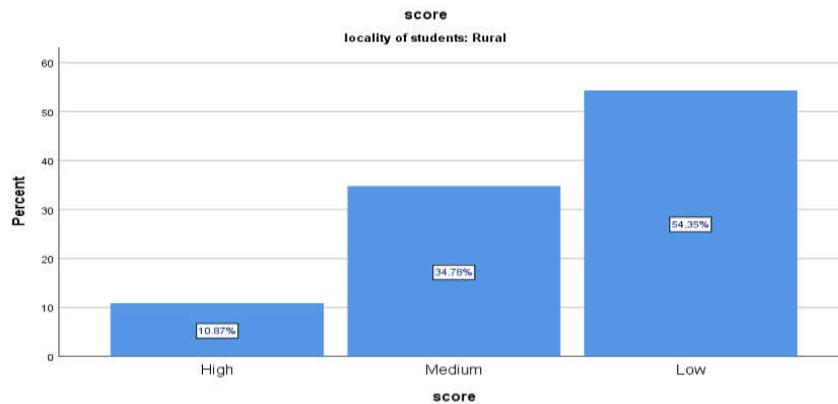


Figure 5: showing the graphical representation of scholastic achievement scores from the students of rural locality

From the Table 6 and graphical representation 5, it is being found that that in the rural locality the scholastic achievement of ashramic students the low performance is high with 54.3%, medium scorer with 34.8% and high scorer with 10.0%. Therefore, the environmental factors has significant effect on the scholastic achievements of secondary students in Ashram schools. There low performance is high as they the teaching learning resources, seating arrangements in class, laboratory equipment's etc are deficient as par requirement. However, the rural school were spacious enough in compare to urban but dearth of management in school leads to decline in scholastic achievement.

Conclusion

From the above discussion it is concluded that these issues, can be resolved if the stakeholders of education and the government take a keen interest on the pertinent problems. If the government allocates sufficient funds, devote a positive attitude towards the ashram schools, and implements it effectively, these issues can certainly be solved. The students are the future of tomorrow they need to be properly nourished with affection, care and love. Therefore, the school authorities need to give attention to all the environmental factors in the school so that their pertinent issues can be solved and their academic success can be increased. Government should frame guideline for monitoring, evaluating and assessing the criteria in order to enhance their scholastic achievement.

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